LET US HOLD ALOFT THE BANNER OF INDEPENDENCE AND PEACE

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Speech delivered by Prime minister Pham Van Dong at a meeting held on September 1, 1965 in Hanoi on the 20th founding anniversary of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam

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Respected President Ho Chi Minh,

Dear comrades and friends,

Dear compatriots,

Today, we are commemorating the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

On behalf of the Central Committee of the Vietnam Workers' Party and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, I wish to convey the most affectionate and warmest greetings to all our compatriots, all fighters, and all Vietnamese residents abroad.

In celebrating the National Day this year, our entire people look back, with full confidence and boundless enthusiasm, to the victorious path they have trodden over the past twenty years, close their ranks more tightly, heighten still further their will to fight U.S. aggression for national salvation, to preserve national independence, to achieve the peaceful reunification of the country, and to step up the revolutionary struggle so as to advance toward building up a peaceful, united, independent, democratic, strong and prosperous Vietnam.

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, our

entire people convey their warm and cordial greetings to thousands of millions of brothers and friends of ours throughout the five continents. We are sincerely grateful for the great sympathy, support and assistance extended to our revolutionary cause by the peoples of the world, and pledge ourselves to strengthen our solidarity with the peoples of the socialist countries, of Asian, African, Latin American and other countries, and actively to contribute to the cause of peace, national independence, democracy and social progress in the world.

TWENTY YEARS OF UNITY, STRUGGLE AND VICTORY

THE AUGUST REVOLUTION AND THE FOUNDING OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

The August Revolution, a national-people's democratic revolution led by the working class, triumphed in the context of the favourable conditions created by the victory of the heroic Soviet army and people in World War II over the German and Japanese fascists. It overthrew the century-old rule of the French colonialists colluding with the feudal forces, led to the founding of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the first People's Democratic State in the history of our country, and ushered in a new era in the life of our nation.

The Democratic Republic of Vietnam, born from the August Revolution, is a glorious victory of the heroic Vietnamese people. It is the work and achievement of all our compatriots. It is a great creation of the Vietnamese working class under the brilliant leadership of the former Indochinese Communist Party which has become the Vietnam Workers' Party. It is a victory of international significance of Marxism-Leninism in a colonial country.

Before the August Revolution, the Vietnamese people were not the masters of their country, and had to live in abject slavery. After the triumph of the August Revolution, they became the masters of an independent country and of their own destiny, and set up a People's Democratic State to safeguard their national independence, promote the cause of the revolution and build up a new life. The August Revolution and the founding of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam brought great and profound enthusiasm to all social strata in Vietnam. So much blood and sweat, so much labour and so many heroic struggles through many generations have now borne fruit: our beloved Fatherland, from the Vietnam-China border down to the Camau Cape, now belongs to us.

On September 2, 1945, the whole Vietnamese people jubilantly listened to the Proclamation of Independence, exuberant with vitality, joy, pride and the will to struggle for the defence of the nation's independence, the people's freedom and the country's territorial integrity. The Proclamation of Independence and the words of President Ho Chi

Minh, the founder of new Vietnam, turned every Vietnamese patriot into a staunch fighter determined to fight and win victory for the revolutionary cause of the whole nation for the interests of the people and the glory of the Fatherland. Despite the storms the revolutionary cause had to weather thereafter and the enemy's schemes of aggression against Vietnam, the course of history cannot be turned back. With a people's democratic power in their hands, the position and strength of our people had undergone a complete change.

The French colonialists who had returned to Vietnam again attempted to divide our country and reimpose their rule on our people. As they had done one century ago, they began their new war of aggression in the South and from there gradually advanced to the North. But they were defeated. Today, the U.S. imperialists are rushing headlong onto the criminal path of the French colonialists. They also attempt to divide Vietnam and rule over our people. They also start heir aggression in the South, and from there step by step move to the North. But they, too, are sustaining failures, and will certainly meet with total defeat. No force in the present - day world can divide our country, and restore colonialism in our heroic land! Carrying aloft the great banner of the August Revolution and enhancing their tradition of unity and victorious struggle, our countrymen will resolutely struggle and defeat all enemies, overcome all obstacles, and advance toward a peaceful, united, independent, democratic, strong and prosperous Vietnam.

The birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam coincided with the tremendously powerful national-liberation upsurge in Asia, Africa, and Latin America which, since the end of World War II, has launched repeated attacks on the colonial system, broken up big chunks of it, and dealt deadly blows at imperialism and colonialism. Nine years later, in Vietnam, the world-famous victory of Dienbienphu adds a glorious page to the history of oppressed peoples and demonstrates that in the present era, a people however small, can defeat a powerful imperialist aggressor and liberate itself, if it is closely united and is determined to struggle in accordance with a correct line.

At present, the holy patriotic struggle in South Vietnam and our entire people's resistance against U.S. aggression for national salvation are bringing the people's revolutionary war to new heights, displaying magnificent examples of determination to fight and win victories for the defence of sacred national rights, and demonstrating that the peoples of the world are quite capable of defeating U.S. imperialism, the most dangerous enemy of mankind. Our people's victories powerfully encourage the Asian, African and Latin American peoples to rise up and smash imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism.

For ten years now, North Vietnam has been entirely liberated, has rapidly completed the national-people's democratic revolution and has embarked on the path of socialism. The new life which is now blooming up in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam

has demonstrated that in the present epoch, a former colony with a backward agricultural economy, relying mainly on the strength of its own people and making good use of the assistance from the fraternal socialist countries, can perfectly advance directly toward socialism, bypassing the stage of capitalist development.

Thus, under the leadership of the revolutionary vanguard Party, our people have simultaneously carried aloft the banner of national liberation, people's democracy and the banner of socialism, thereby contributing to enlighten the path of revolutionary struggle and the path toward complete self-liberation of the oppressed peoples.

NINE YEARS OF RESISTANCE WAR AGAINST THE FRENCH COLONIALISTS

The past twenty years of existence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, twenty great years of struggle for the revolutionary cause of the Vietnamese people, were a process of continuous struggle for the defence of national independence, the development of people's democracy and the advance toward socialism. These were twenty years of constant growth and glorious successes.

Through these twenty years, our struggle, now in the whole country, now in the South alone, has always been spearheaded at imperialist aggressors. Barely three weeks after the establishment of the people's democratic power, the French colonialists fired the first shots to start a new war of aggression designed to reimpose their colonial rule on Vietnam.

As they had done one century earlier, this time they also began their aggression in South Vietnam. And our sacred resistance against the French invaders broke out in the South, to spread one year later to the whole country.

At first, we fought with bare hands and sticks, and were faced with tremendous and seemingly insuperable difficulties: our country had practically been bled white and utterly ruined as a result of a long period of colonial and feudal rule and many years of devastating war; our people's power was still young and so were our armed forces; we lacked practically everything: our country was completely isolated from the world by the imperialist encirclement. Internal reaction sought by all means to foment troubles when a most cunning aggressor, backed by other imperialist powers, had already invaded our country.

But no difficulty whatsoever could force our people to retreat and no enemy whosoever could intimidate us. With seething hatred and undaunted determination all our compatriots from North to South rose up in response to the appeal by our Party and President Ho Chi Minh: "We would rather sacrifice everything than lose our independence. We are determined not to be enslaved again. The hour of struggle for national salvation has struck. Let us make sacrifices till our last drop of blood in order to defend our country. In spite of hardships imposed by the war of resistance, with the determination to make sacrifices, our people will certainly win victory."

Soon after the founding of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and even after the outbreak of the

Resistance war in South Vietnam, we entered into negotiations with the French colonialists on many occasions, and concluded with them a Preliminary Agreement * and a Modus Vivendi ** in an effort to preserve peace. But to the French colonialists, the signing of agreements was only a move designed to gain time and prepare military forces and make plans for further aggression. It was only when our victories had made it clear to them that they could never conquer our country and subdue our people, and that further military adventures would only result in still heavier defeats, that peace could be restored on the basis of the recognition of our national rights. This is a clear lesson of history on relations with the imperialists which our people will never forget.

The Resistance war against the French aggressors is a glorious epic of our people who, under the correct leadership of the Marxist-Leninist Party and in close unity, fought in a most heroic and creative manner. Weak at the outset, they knew how to oppose a stronger foe. The more they fought, the greater their victories, the stronger their forces and the further they aggravated the basic weaknesses of the enemy. Step by step they frustrated all the latter's war plans, gradually grew from weakness into strength and won the victory. Our Resistance war surged ahead still more powerfully after the triumph of the Chinese revolution. With the founding of the People's Republic of China, our country was linked with the

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* March 6, 1946.

** September 14, 1946.

socialist camp and could benefit the wholehearted and powerful aid of China and the other fraternal socialist countries.

After nine years of resistance against the French colonialists' aggression and the ever more direct intervention of the U.S. imperialists, our people scored a big victory at Dienbienphu, and succeeded in checking the U.S. scheme of prolonging and expanding the Indochina war. The Dienbienphu victory determined the success of the 1954 Geneva Conference, and led to the signing of the Geneva Agreements which restored peace on the basis of the recognition of the independence, unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of our country, and at the same time, provided for the holding of nation-wide free general elections in two years to achieve the reunification of our Fatherland.

Throughout the war of aggression, from the start of the invasion up to the moment when they were faced with impending disaster and were preparing to get out of Vietnam, the French colonialists ceaselessly hatched and carried out many schemes to divide our country from the creation of an "autonomous Cochinchina" to the "Cochinchina State" project. Also right from the beginning, President Ho Chi Minh expressed in clear-cut terms the rock-like resolve of our people, the historical reality of our country as well as the sacred feelings of all our compatriots: "South Vietnam is the blood of our blood, the flesh of our flesh. Rivers may dry up, mountains may wear out, but this truth can never be altered."

These words uttered some twenty years ago, and similar ones in the last few years by President Ho Chi Minh about South Vietnam in the Resistance war against U.S. aggression, so to speak, are echoing the voice of our ancestors, the voice of our homeland. They are the expression of our attachment to our country, the sacred sentiments of our people which are endowed with an invincible strength capable of surely knocking down any aggressor who dares encroach upon our beloved Fatherland.

While intensifying the anti-imperialist War of Resistance, our people also carried out the democratic revolution step by step. In 1953, as the fight became fiercer it was necessary strongly to increase the strength of the peasants. On the basis of a series of democratic measures already implemented in the preceding years, we aroused the masses for the thorough reduction of land rent and land reform. This was a broad, deep and mighty revolutionary movement of millions of labouring peasants under the leadership of the Party. It unfolded during the Resistance war itself and was completed in North Vietnam after the restoration of peace. The land reform yielded extremely important results, economically, politically and socially. It fulfilled the age-old aspirations of the labouring peasants, namely "land to the tillers", completely eliminated the economic position and political influence of the feudal class, strengthened and enhanced the political supremacy of the labouring peasants in the countryside, greatly increased the latter's strength, and contributed a significant part to the victory of Dienbienphu and to the final

victory of the Resistance war. After the restoration of peace, the land reform vigorously pushed ahead the rapid economic rehabilitation in North Vietnam, opening the way to its advance toward socialism.

ELEVEN YEARS OF CONSTRUCTION WORK IN COMPLETELY LIBERATED NORTH VIETNAM

Since 1954, our revolution has entered a new stage of development: North Vietnam advances to socialism, South Vietnam carries on the national people's democratic revolution, the whole nation struggles for the implementation of the Geneva Agreements and the peaceful reunification of the country.

In the past eleven years, after its complete liberation, North Vietnam, which was under colonial and semi-feudal rule and whose economy was, moreover, heavily devastated by war, has, by relying mainly on the strength of its people and using the great and valuable aid of the fraternal socialist countries, directly embarked on the path of socialism, despite the difficult conditions resulting from the temporary partition of the country and the constant sabotage activities in all fields of the U.S. imperialists and their agents. These eleven years of creative labour have brought about brilliant successes, worthy of the lofty sacrifices made by our heroic Southern compatriots who have continuously struggled in the frontline for the liberation of the South, the defence of the North, the defence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The Democratic Republic of Vietnam has rapidly healed its war wounds, achieved the land reform,

completed in the main the agricultural and handicraft cooperation, and the peaceful transformation of private capitalist industry and trade. At present, it is actively engaging in socialist industrialization, setting up the initial material and technical bases of socialism, developing agriculture and industry, science and technology, pushing forward the cultural and ideological revolution, thus steadily advancing to the build up of an independent and sovereign economy, and gradually raise the living standard of the people.

In agriculture, food production increased by nearly 50 per cent in the past eleven years, that is, more than doubled the output of the peak year under French domination, and thus the chronic dearth, aftermath of dreadful centuries of colonial and feudal rule has been eliminated. The former monoculture has changed into a diversified rural economy with a balanced production of food and industrial crops and animal husbandry. Intensive and increase of output with the use of advanced techniques chiefly in cultivation, along with the stepping up of land reclaiming, are ensuring the vigorous and steady progress of agriculture.

In industry, in the past eleven years, the output value has increased nearly twentyfold. The part of industry in the total industrial-agricultural output value increased by from 17 per cent in 1955 to 50 per cent in 1964. At present, North Vietnam is developing various branches of light industry to meet the requirements of the people and is building the initial bases of the main branches of heavy industry, and

due to this, North Vietnam's industry is now producing nearly 90 per cent of consumer goods and part of small-and medium-size means of production.

In the cultural and social fields, 95 per cent of the population can now read and write, one out of four people is attending school. The number of students has increased by 23 times in the past ten years and is 44 times larger than that of the three countries of Indochina taken together in the peak year under French domination. Since the restoration of peace, the number of graduates from colleges and high schools in the country is 50 times the number educated during nearly one century of French colonization. The public health service is also developing rapidly. The hygiene and prophylaxis movement is being intensified among the masses. The prophylactic and medical network is expanding in the cities, the countryside and the mountainous areas, gradually eradicating epidemics and combating many social diseases. These are brilliant achievements in protecting and improving the people's health.

On account of increased production, better educational, cultural and public health services, the material and cultural living conditions of the labouring people in the countryside and the cities have markedly improved.

In North Vietnam, a new social regime has come into being and is developing: the feudal class has been eliminated, the bourgeoisie transformed, exploitation of man by man fundamentally abolished and socialist relations of production established.

This has opened up the brightest prospects for the productive forces.

In North Vietnam, the new material and technical bases of socialism are taking shape and growing up step by step, a technical revolution for mechanization being gradually carried out with the ever-wider use of pumps and improved tools in cooperatives up to the building of modern industrial centres in various places of our country, which increases the possibility of man to conquer and transform nature. On the basis of developing the productive forces, the relations of production in the State and co-operative sectors have been continuously strengthened and perfected.

In North Vietnam, a new man has come into being and is rapidly growing up: he is the worker in State enterprises, the co-operative member, the fighter of the people's armed forces, the socialist intellectual worker. These are collective masters of their country's life, of their own destinies, inheriting and enhancing the traditional noble virtues of their people. With this as a basis, they are more and more imbued with the new ethics and the new morality of the citizen of socialist Vietnam.

The North Vietnamese society becomes more and more homogenous, moral and political unity among the various social strata is increasing. The fraternal nationalities united into one bloc, moved by the same feelings and the same will, and standing shoulder to shoulder under the leadership of the Party and Government, are joining their strength and talents to build a new life in their beloved Fatherland.

For our whole country, the brilliant achievements of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam has a great significance and a great effect, since socialist North Vietnam is the base for the struggle to achieve the revolutionary cause of our entire people. They strengthen the confidence and enthusiasm of our Southern compatriots, encourage them to fight vigorously against the U.S. imperialist aggressors. They increase the strength of the socialist North and enables it to make further efforts to fight and produce, resolutely to defend itself and, at the same time, to give more vigorous and more effective support to the patriotic struggle of our Southern compatriots, and still better play its role as the firm base for the struggle for the peaceful reunification of our country.

THE HOLY PATRIOTIC WAR IN SOUTH VIETNAM

Had the Geneva Agreements been implemented, our country would have been reunified nine years ago and North and South would now be living under the same roof. But it is still partitioned. While in the North, our people are actively building socialism and beginning to enjoy the fine fruits of their labour, in South Vietnam, peace has been wrecked, the flames of war hardly put out have been rekindled, raging now everywhere and causing every day untold sufferings and mournings to our Southern fellow-countrymen.

The root and direct cause of this state of things are the aggressive war, the predatory war started by

the U.S. imperialists. The latter carry out this war in an attempt to prolong indefinitely their occupation of South Vietnam, and to turn it into a new-type colony and a military base for their war preparations against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries.

After the signing of the 1954 Geneva Agreements, the people of South Vietnam, like their compatriots in the whole country, longed to enjoy peace and their fundamental national rights as recognized by the said Agreements. In various ways, they have expressed their legitimate aspirations, especially concerning the reunification of the country by peaceful means. But the U.S. imperialists and their stooges ruthlessly started massacring our people right after the cease-fire provided for by the Geneva Agreements had been put into effect in South Vietnam. They feverishly drowned in blood all patriotic forces standing for independence, democracy and peaceful reunification of the country. They deprived the people of all democratic rights. They set up concentration camps disguised as "prosperity zones", "agricultural settlements" to lay their grip on the people in the countryside and the mountainous areas. They thought that by savage terrorism they could quench the patriotic movement. But the heroic South Vietnamese people stood up, determined to fight the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys. The more the enemy resorts to savage terrorism, the stronger the patriotic struggle of the people grows.

At the time when the policy of terrorism of the U.S. imperialists and their agents became extremely

ruthless in late 1959, when they dragged about their guillotine to massacre the people en masse our Southern countrymen's hatred was at its peak. The people stood up in insurrection with an indomitable will and the strength of millions of men, determined to hold on, to defeat with rudimentary weapons the enemy armed forces and to overthrow the puppet administration in the countryside.

In 1960, in response to the pressing requirements of the patriotic struggle, the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation came into being, closely uniting all strata of the people, holding aloft the banner of patriotism, and starting the Resistance war against U.S. imperialist aggression.

In their unjust and extremely atrocious war in South Vietnam, the U.S. imperialists have resorted to cruel means, in an attempt to subdue our compatriots' resistance: they have used many kinds of modern weapons, including napalm bombs and toxic chemicals, to massacre the people, destroy villages, and burn forests; they have carried out mass murder of defenceless people, torn up children's bodies, burnt alive old men, raped women, acting as barbarously as the satanic Hitlerites in the past. They have endeavoured to propagate corrupted customs and habits, particularly in towns and cities, applying all measures to hooliganize the youth and to poison the people's mind. These crimes have deepened the hatred for the U.S. aggressors, steeled the patriotism and the will of all sections of the people to fight them. This is the source of the invincible strength of the patriotic struggle in South Vietnam. The network of

"strategic hamlets" – the backbone of the U.S.-puppet regime, the mercenary army – the main tool for the U.S. neo-colonialist war of aggression, and the towns and cities – their safe rear areas, all these three props of the enemy's rule are now collapsing. All U. S. plans for aggression in South Vietnam have successively met with utter failure. The South Vietnam National Front for Liberation, now controlling more than four fifths of South Vietnam's territory and over two thirds of its population, is the only genuine representative of the South Vietnamese people, and enjoys an increasing prestige and influence in the international arena. It is now the master of the situation in South Vietnam and must have a decisive say in the settlement of the South Vietnam question. In the meantime, the Saigon quisling administration which have unmasked themselves more and more clearly as the U.S. imperialists' henchmen, as traitors to their country, are hated by our compatriots and regarded by world opinion as mere puppets.

In fact, the U.S. imperialists and their agents in South Vietnam have suffered defeat after defeat, while the people score ever greater victories.

Since the end of 1964, and particularly since the beginning of 1965, i. e. since the massive intensification of the U.S. imperialists' aggressive war in South Vietnam and the start of their air attacks on North Vietnam, the patriotic struggle in South Vietnam has powerfully developed. The repeated and resounding victories on all battlefields in South Vietnam are just like thunder blows dealt at the U.S. aggressors and their agents ; even their most strongly

fortified positions, such as Bienhoa and Danang air bases, have been the targets of marvellous attacks not once but many times. Of late, the South Vietnam Liberation Army recorded a very brilliant victory at Vantuong (near Chulai base) where more than one U.S. marine battalion were wiped out and many U.S. aircraft and armoured vehicles of different types destroyed. However, the U.S. propaganda machinery tried to describe this humiliating defeat of theirs as a victory in an attempt to conceal the truth that the U.S. military forces massively introduced of late into South Vietnam are doomed to defeats still heavier than before.

Those glorious victories have filled our people throughout the country with enthusiasm and elated the people the world over.

On this occasion, on behalf of all compatriots in North Vietnam I wish to convey the blood-sealed love and the deep admiration and confidence to the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation and to the South Vietnamese army and people, the heroic fighters of a heroic people. I wish that our compatriots and combatants will steadily march forward with the mettle and strength of victors, and deal at the enemy still more crushing blows in order to drive out the U.S. aggressors, liberate South Vietnam and achieve peaceful reunification of the Fatherland.

The whole Vietnamese people are deeply proud of their most staunch and heroic compatriots in South Vietnam. More than ever, the compatriots in North and South Vietnam are one-minded and united, we shall certainly win victory.

OUR ENTIRE PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE AGAINST U.S. IMPERIALISM FOR NATIONAL SALVATION

Having suffered bitter defeats in South Vietnam, the U.S. imperialist aggressors are frenziedly pursuing a most dangerous policy: frantic intensification of the aggressive war in South Vietnam and extension of air attacks on North Vietnam.

These acts of aggression places our Revolution in a new context, namely, our whole country is in a state of war. At the Democratic Republic of Vietnam National Assembly session early in April this year, President Ho Chi Minh appealed to our entire people: "Our people are living in an extremely glorious period of our history... At present, to oppose the U.S. aggressors and save the country is the most sacred duty of every Vietnamese patriot."

Our heroic compatriots and fighters in the South are marching forward to win ever greater victories in order to liberate it and to defend the North.

In North Vietnam, our army and people, on the one hand, are enthusiastically emulating one another in production work, on the other, they are heroically fighting to defend the North and wholeheartedly support the South.

The entire Vietnamese people united like one man, are determined to defeat the U.S. aggressors.

In comparison with the time of the Resistance war against the French colonialists, we are now in much more favourable conditions in the struggle against U.S. aggression for national salvation: our

struggle in all respects is greater, our experiences are richer; besides, we enjoy the support of the mighty socialist camp, of millions of people in Asia, Africa, Latin America and other countries of the world.

In South Vietnam, the U.S. imperialists are frantically increasing their military strength and extending their war of aggression. At present, the United States and its satellites have over 90,000 combat troops * in South Vietnam. Yet, they are still endeavouring to bring in more U.S. troops. They may continue to intensify and expand the war to the extent of introducing a U.S. expeditionary force of some hundred thousand men into South Vietnam, thus waging themselves the aggressive war there. Then they would only meet with still heavier defeats and will be bogged down more deeply and the South Vietnamese army and people will score greater and more glorious victories. Such is the inevitable course of the patriotic war in South Vietnam, as inevitable as day comes after night.

Our Southern compatriots are fighting more vigorously than ever, they will fight still more vigorously until final victory when not a single U.S. aggressor is left on their beloved land. As the July 20, 1965 appeal of the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation rightly pointed out: "At present, our army and people are much stronger than before. We have more and more friends in the five continents. Our position is that of victors. As for our enemies, they

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* 128,000 men up to September 15, 1965.

stand more and more isolated and are in the process of agony, collapse and defeat. No matter what ruthless and perfidious schemes and tricks they may resort to, they cannot escape ignominious defeat."

The extension of air attacks on North Vietnam by the U.S. imperialists is an extremely blatant war act against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, an independent and sovereign country. This is a most serious violation of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Indochina, of the U.N. Charter and of international law. In their "escalation" against North Vietnam the U.S. imperialists have committed inhumane crimes, bombing and strafing densely populated areas, many hospitals, among others the Quynhlap* leprosery savagely destroyed some time ago, public utility installations, such as the Banthach** dam which was recently attacked for many consecutive days. These acts have exposed the aggressive and extremely cruel nature of the U.S. imperialists, further deepened the seething hatred of our compatriots and stirred up indignation throughout the world. The U.S. aggressors think that, by launching air raids on the North, they can intimidate our people in both zones and at the same time menace the peoples of the socialist countries and the world. In reply to this threat, our people both in North and in South, far from flinching, have dealt, are dealing and will deal ever stronger blows at the U.S. aggressors and their agents. Meanwhile the peoples in the socialist coun-

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* Nghean province.

** Thanhhoa province.

tries, in Asia, Africa, Latin America and other parts of the world stand up to oppose the U.S. imperialists and support our just struggle more strongly and more effectively than ever.

In the North, since August 5, 1964, our army and people have been fighting most heroically, hitting still more strongly at the U.S. imperialist aggressors. To date, over 500* U.S. planes have been shot down. These are victories of great significance in many respects recorded by the army and people of North Vietnam, by all the people's armed forces including militia women with their rifles. The gallant army and people of North Vietnam will certainly score still more glorious victories.

At present, our compatriots in North Vietnam are pushing up the emulation drive to fight U.S. aggression for national salvation, our workers and peasants "holding firmly the hammer or the plough in one hand, and the rifle in the other", the people's armed forces "determined to defeat the U.S. aggressors", the youth practising the "three-readies"**, the women the "three responsibilities" ***, our whole people enthusiastically doing production work on the one hand, and courageously fighting or standing ready to fight on the other. Under the leadership of the Party, the guidance and management of the People's Democratic State, our compatriots tighten their ranks, enhance

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* 621 planes up to September 30, 1965.

** Ready to fight, ready to join the army, ready to go wherever the country requires them to and to defeat any enemy.

*** To assume production jobs while their husbands, sons and brothers are at the front, to take good care of their families so that the men can devote heart and soul to the fighting, to stand ready to serve the front when necessary.

their political and moral one-mindedness, strive to strengthen the economic and defensive potential of the North, resolutely defeat the U.S. imperialists' "escalation", and are ready to smash all their manœuvres to extend the war. They will constantly heighten their vigilance, firmly maintain order and security, resolutely defend the North and wholeheartedly support the South. Our people will continue to push forward the socialist revolution, to build up the material and technical bases of socialism, and to consolidate the socialist relations of production, and on this basis, to increase substantially North Vietnam's strength in all respects.

The U.S. imperialists still continue the "escalation" in the North. Our people are not afraid at all. The higher the escalation, the harder will be the fall! At present, along with the frenzied dispatch of tens of thousands of reinforcement troops into South Vietnam, the U.S. imperialists have directly committed the 7th Fleet to the aggressive war in Vietnam in various ways: daily bombings of North and South Vietnam by carrier-based planes, naval shellings of coastal areas, and preparations for the landing of U.S. combat units. They may even start a new Korean war in this area. But in this event, heavier would be their defeat and greater our victory.

THE REASONS FOR OUR VICTORY

Our people will surely win, the U.S. imperialist aggressors will surely be defeated for the following reasons:

1. At home, our people have thoroughly grasped two things which have been tested and proved by our nation's long history of struggle against imperialist aggression before the August Revolution and especially since the Resistance war against the French colonialists. They are:

— To unite the entire people, to wage a resolute and persistent struggle, to fight to a finish, to pledge every sacrifice for the supreme interests of the nation, freedom and happiness of the people, the unity and the territorial integrity of the Fatherland.

— To know what weapon to use in order to defeat any imperialist aggressors including the U.S. imperialists: the people's patriotic war. The Vietnamese army and people have developed the people's patriotic war to a high level, in a creative, all-sided, rich and steady way.

2. In the world, the situation is very favourable to our people:

— The socialist camp becomes more and more powerful, all socialist countries are extending wholehearted support and assistance to our people; close to us, like the lips to the teeth, are the staunch Chinese people. Always side by side with us are the peoples of the mighty Soviet Union and the other fraternal socialist countries.

— The newly independent countries, the international working class, the forces of peace and progress in all countries, including the United States, are vigorously supporting our people's just struggle.

3. In the meantime, the U.S. imperialists and all other reactionary forces in the world are sustaining defeat after defeat, and are weakening and on the way to annihilation. Over the past few years, the weakening of the U.S. imperialists has become more obvious in all respects. There exist sharpening contradictions between the United States and other imperialist countries. The struggle for democracy, freedom and peace in the United States itself has driven the American imperialists to greater embarrassment and isolation than ever.

This is the deep root of the repeated great victories scored by the peoples of the world in their revolutionary struggle. It is also the deep root of the certain victory of the Vietnamese people.

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In the past twenty years, our people have made greater steps forward than in any other period of their long and glorious history. This is because we have today a decisive factor which could not exist before, and which has brought into play to the largest extent the patriotism, gallantry, heroism, intelligence and creativeness of our people. This factor is the Party of the working class, the Marxist-Leninist Party, which has led the Vietnamese people to the greatest achievements in their history.

The Communist Party of Indochina of former days, the Vietnam Workers' Party of today, headed by President Ho Chi Minh, has creatively applied the principles of Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of Vietnam, and has mapped out the correct line of the national-people's democratic revolution advancing to socialism.

In the process of an arduous, protracted and most valiant revolutionary struggle, our Party has persistently striven to foster other factors of victory, namely, a solid worker-peasant alliance, a broad national united front, ever stronger people's armed forces, and a people's democratic State as an efficacious instrument to promote the unceasing advance of the revolutionary cause.

The Party has persistently educated our people in a spirit of closely combining genuine patriotism with proletarian internationalism, constantly tightening solidarity and friendship with the fraternal socialist countries, and also with the Asian, African and Latin American peoples, the working class and labouring people of capitalist countries, and all forces of peace and progress in the world.

Looking back to the glorious path they have traversed over the past twenty years, our people are all the more confident and enthusiastic in marching forward under the banner of the Vietnam Workers' Party, the invincible banner of Marxism-Leninism, with the firm resolve to win ever bigger and more glorious victories.

LET US HOLD ALOFT THE BANNER OF INDEPENDENCE AND PEACE, WIN THE SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE OF THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD, RESOLUTELY FIGHT AND DEFEAT THE U.S. IMPERIALIST AGGRESSORS

INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST U.S. AGGRESSION FOR NATIONAL SALVATION

The vivid realities of the political life in the world arena as well as in many countries show that our patriotic struggle against U.S. aggression is of very great international significance.

Clearly enough, the political circles and people from all walks of life in various countries are now most concerned about the Vietnam question. The fierce war now raging in our land requires that everybody take position : whom to side with ? which to support, the Vietnamese people's just struggle for national independence and genuine peace or the unjust and criminal war of the U.S. imperialist aggressors and warmongers ? It is obvious that our people's great struggle is posing to the peoples of the world, and human conscience, far-reaching and fundamental questions which should lead to clear-cut and sharp answers.

The U.S. imperialists are waging in Vietnam an unjust and criminal war of aggression !

The Vietnamese people's fight is a just one !

The American imperialist aggression is the origin of all kinds of unjust wars!

The Vietnamese people's fight is one for independence and peace!

The U.S. imperialists are suffering defeats and will suffer utter failure!

The Vietnamese people are winning victories and will win final victory!

South Vietnam must be liberated! Vietnam must be reunified!

Why is our people's patriotic struggle enjoying deep and broad sympathy and support from the peoples of the world? That is because it is closely linked to the revolutionary struggle of the world peoples in our times, to the cause of national liberation, socialism and world peace, in short, to the most fundamental objectives of the struggle of the entire mankind in the present historical period.

The Vietnam question and the Vietnam war have become a central question in the political life of the world, and have a deep impact on that of many countries. Various sections of the world people and peace-and justice-loving people realize more and more clearly the great and deep international significance of our people's patriotic struggle, hence, more and more, they wholeheartedly approve, support and help our people in defeating U.S. imperialism, the enemy of socialism, national independence and peace.

The unremitting and glorious struggle waged by our people has laid bare before the world people the

features of U.S. imperialism, its nature, its schemes, its over-all policy of aggression and war. The stronger our people's struggle and the greater their victories, the bigger the U.S. aggressors' defeats and the further they engage in the path of reckless adventures, and the more they reveal themselves in their true face as aggressors and warmongers who trample underfoot the most sacred rights of all nations and threaten the security of many countries and the peace of the world. The realization of this fact is of far-reaching importance, it mobilizes all forces of the world people for eventually establishing a front, spearheading the struggle against U.S. imperialism and all other reactionary forces which are colluding with it. Since the end of World War II, since U. S. imperialism emerged on the international arena with its mad dream of world hegemony, never has the world people's movement against U.S. imperialism been so broad and so powerful as today, never has U.S. imperialism been so strongly condemned and isolated as today. The world people's front against the U. S. imperialist aggressors and warmongers is a great victory for the Vietnamese people and the people of the world, including the American people. It is a factor of paramount importance in the struggle now going on for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress throughout the world.

This struggle is developing both in breadth and in depth with diverse forms in many countries. The peoples of the fraternal socialist countries are extending us wholehearted support and assistance. This is

a most mighty support for our struggle against U.S. aggression for national salvation. In the countries subjected to the U.S. imperialists' policy of intervention in the military, political, economic and cultural fields, the people are very quick to link up the struggle against U.S. imperialist aggression in Vietnam with that for their vital interests, against U.S. imperialism and the reactionary forces colluding with it. Here we hail the valiant struggle of the peoples of Laos and Cambodia, our two neighbours, as well as the valiant struggle of the people of the Republic of Indonesia. At present, in many parts of Asia, especially Southeast Asia, in Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, etc., the people from all walks of life are gradually standing up against their ruling circles who are selling out their national rights to the American imperialists, and turning their countries into bases of the American bandits in the war of aggression in Vietnam. Such a situation is prevailing in Europe, right now in the centre of Europe, where twenty years after Hitlerism was wiped out, the American imperialists and West German revanchists, are frienziedly trying to rekindle the flames of war, thus bringing about an immense danger to the peace and security of many countries in that area and in the whole world. The same is the situation in the Caribbean and Latin America, in the Congo, Angola and throughout Africa. In all those places, the people's movement of support for Vietnam is developing at the same tempo as the movement against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism headed by U.S. imperialism. It is clear that

this movement is surging ahead ever more powerfully and fiercely with political struggle being combined with armed struggle, and that it will be certainly crowned with glorious successes.

The same situation is also prevailing in the United States, and involving all sections of the people: intellectuals and students, youth, women, democratic and progressive organizations, peace organizations, religious communities, American Whites and American Negroes. Johnson's "dirty war" deeply shocks the conscience of a great many Americans, and arouses tens of thousands of people to rise up in struggle with diverse and vivid forms: discussions on the Vietnam question and the U.S. administration's dangerous policy, demonstrations against the dispatch of troops to Vietnam, tearing up of draft cards... The struggle against the aggressive war in Vietnam and for the writhdrawal of American troops from South Vietnam is closely coordinated with the struggle for democracy and peace and the struggle against radical discrimination. This movement is developing.

The warm support and aid extended by the people of the world to the Vietnamese people's just struggle has been given concentrated and striking expressions in many international conferences held in Hanoi, Phnom Penh, Djakarta, Cairo, Accra, etc. and more recently in Helsinki and other places. In those conferences, the representatives of hundreds of millions of people from all walks of life in the whole world, unanimously adopted very correct resolutions in Vietnam, on the war in Vietnam, sternly condemned the U.S. imperialist aggressors and warmongers,

energetically supported the Vietnamese people's just and certainly victorious struggle, and resolutely backed the four-point stand of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the March 22, 1965 Statement by the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation. These Conferences are manifestations of the militant solidarity between the peoples of the world and the Vietnamese people in the struggle for national independence, peace, democracy, and social progress in Vietnam and throughout the world. Good seeds have been sown everywhere on earth and they will yield good crops.

In this spirit, we are making every effort to contribute to the good success of the forthcoming Second Afro-Asian Conference marking a new step in the development of Afro-Asian solidarity against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism headed by U.S. imperialism, in support of the Vietnamese people's just and certainly victorious struggle.

LET US HOLD ALOFT THE BANNER OF INDEPENDENCE AND PEACE

A point of paramount importance in the international significance of our people's patriotic struggle is that it tightly links national independence with peace, a genuine peace in our country and at the same time conducive to the defence of peace in Indochina, Southeast Asia and the world. This is real independence and peace and not the U.S. type-independence and "peace" under the iron heels of the U.S. imperialists.

Due to its character, our people's patriotic struggle which is by nature a struggle for independence and peace, aims at eliminating the immediate cause of war, that is, the American imperialists' policy of aggression in Vietnam, and its deep root, American imperialism.

The banner of struggle for national independence of our people is also the banner of struggle for peace. This objective reality, the radiant justness of our holy struggle, accounts for the widest support we have won from the peoples of the world. It precisely explains why the U.S. imperialists are seeking ways and means to sow confusion, to misrepresent our people who are peace-fighters as aggressors, to spin the tale of North Vietnam invading South Vietnam and to describe themselves—aggressors and warmongers—as people eager for peace and ready to contribute to peace.

Why are the U.S. President and ruling circles who formerly never talked about peace and peace negotiations, now so "keen" on peace and peace negotiations? President Johnson has even time and again reiterated his readiness for "unconditional discussions" and sought to exculpate himself before world public opinion by asserting that the American side's repeated peace sounding had found no response.

A few years ago, the President and military and political circles of the United States often made arrogant statements. They said that the "Viet Cong must be wiped out", that "they are resolved to pacify South Vietnam" and that "the so-called national-liberation war in South Vietnam must be defeated to set a good

example for the world". But their tone has now changed; in his speech delivered on July 28, President Johnson began even to talk about his "readiness to discuss Hanoi's proposals", to mention the question of reunifying Vietnam, and the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation! Why is there such a change? Is that an indication of Washington's "willingness" for peace?

To answer this question, the main thing is not to consider the statements by the U.S. ruling circles but their deeds! What have they done? They have been intensifying the aggressive war in South Vietnam and stepping up the "escalation" in the North. They have hurriedly taken the decision of sending to South Vietnam another 50,000 U.S. combat troops, and still more in the future, and at the same time they are making preparations in all fields for the expansion of the war in this area.

In a word, President Johnson talks about peace in an attempt to cover up his war schemes, and the more he talks about peace, the more he steps up the war! The U.S. imperialists are being opposed by the world and American people, who are demanding that they stop the aggressive war in Vietnam, return to the Geneva Agreements, accept the four-point stand of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and recognize the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation... They have lost the initiative and are greatly embarrassed. So it is necessary for them to make hypocritical statements about peace in an attempt to deceive public opinion and to soothe opposition by the people of the world and the United

States. They even hope to win the sympathy and support of political circles in some countries for the intensification of their aggressive war in Vietnam. This is the true face of the U.S. imperialists.

We must expose them on these two points:

1. They are speeding up at an unprecedented pace the aggressive war in South Vietnam with the dispatch there of a U. S. expeditionary force and satellite mercenaries in an effort to turn it into a new-type colony and military base of the United States, and permanently partition Vietnam. More than ever, President Johnson is mobilizing his war machine to carry out the U. S. aggressive designs in South Vietnam!

2. To achieve these aggressive aims, the U.S. imperialists further step up the "escalation" of the war to North Vietnam in an attempt to intimidate the Vietnamese people, in the South and in the North, to maintain their control over South Vietnam by force and treachery. Although, the "escalation" has gone bankrupt, they are still trying to carry on their wicked schemes and threatening with further "escalation"!

In a word, for the U.S. imperialists, "peace" means war, their "peace stand" is their war aim, "peaceful" means are but war schemes and "unconditional discussions", our acceptance of their conditions. These conditions are to let them cling to South Vietnam, keep their troops in South Vietnam, and ignore the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation. These conditions are continued intensification of the aggressive

war in Vietnam, massive introduction of U.S. armed forces into South Vietnam and further "escalation" in the North. It is crystal-clear that those are aggressors' conditions that the Vietnamese people cannot accept and world opinion cannot tolerate.

In order to expose the U. S. imperialists as aggressors and warmongers, we call on the people of the world and the United States to push forward the movement demanding that they stop the aggressive war in South Vietnam, put an end to the "escalation" in air attacks against North Vietnam, implement the Geneva Agreements, accept the four-point stand of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the stand expounded in the March 22, 1965 Statement by the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation. Only in this way could there be a genuine and lasting peace in this area and could peace be safeguarded in other parts of the world.

Let our people and our friends persistently elaborate these points to various sections of people and political circles in different lands. The U. S. aggressors must be isolated not only from the people of the world but also from the political circles of various countries. We are quite capable of doing this, because ours is a just struggle and as such it can win the people's mind and heart. Because the U.S. imperialists, by expanding their policy of aggression and war to every part of the world, by continuously resorting to encroachment and pressure even with their allies, are further sharpening the internal contradictions among the imperialists and their satellites. Let

us have a close look at the state of the military alliances between the United States and its allies. What has become of the SEATO ? Practically, just an empty nutshell ! As for the NATO, it is faced with serious internal troubles, etc. In Western countries, the anti-American movement has been undergoing unprecedented developments : there, the people have come to hate the United States, to despise and oppose it, and this is only a beginning.

At present, the U.S. imperialists and their agents are exploiting the unawareness of many people who do not draw a clear distinction between just and unjust wars ; between the imperialist aggressors and the people fighting for the safeguard of their sacred national rights. They also exploit the fear of war, particularly an expanded war, in order to deceive and intimidate world opinion at the same time. On the other hand, they avail themselves of all dependent forces, from the United Nations to their satellites, instigating them to praise U.S. "goodwill" and urge "negotiations", " ending of all hostile acts", "mutüal concessions" and so forth. But the people of the world are vigilant in the face of the American imperialists' deceitful manœuvres, they will not let themselves be fooled or led astray. On the contrary they will realize more clearly through these manœuvres, the most perfidious and obdurate aggressive and bellicose nature of the U.S. imperialists.

With regard to the Vietnam question, stress should be laid on a point of principle in our attitude and position : the U.S. imperialists are the aggressors in

South Vietnam, they are carrying out air attacks on the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, they have perpetrated monstrous crimes against the Vietnamese people and are posing a serious threat to the peace and security of this area!

At present, it is crystal-clear that the people of the world oppose the U.S. aggressive war in Vietnam and condemn the U.S. imperialists as guilty of having started this war. To put it to an end and prevent similar ones in other parts of the world, it is necessary to resolutely stay the hands of the U.S. aggressors and warmongers, source of all types of unjust wars!

As for the U.S. "escalation" of the war to the North, it obviously constitutes an intolerable act of aggression. So far, world opinion has seen through the designs of the U.S. imperialists in undertaking air attacks against North Vietnam: bitterly defeated in the South, they thought that air raids against the North might help them out of the present impasse there and better still, might help them score victory or, at least, carve out a "position of strength" in order to impose negotiations on their own terms. This is indeed typical of the U.S. imperialists' piratical and adventurist policy. To bow down before the threats of the U.S. imperialists, or compromise with them, would constitute an act of encouragement fraught with incalculable consequences. That is why the whole world has unanimously and strongly protested against the U.S. "escalation" of the war to North Vietnam!

In contrast with President Johnson's peace fraud designed to intensify the war of aggression in Vietnam, the Vietnamese people and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam have spared no effort in their fight for independence and peace. The aim of the Vietnamese people's holy struggle has been fully embodied in the four-point stand * of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. This is the sole correct peace stand which has been recognized by world public opinion as the only basis for a settlement of the Vietnam question. This four-point stand fully conforms to the most important political and military provisions of the 1954 Geneva

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* Four-point stand of the D.R.V. Government:

1. Recognition of the fundamental national rights of the Vietnamese people: independence, unity and territorial integrity. In strict conformity with the Geneva Agreements, the U.S. Government must withdraw its troops, military personnel, weapons, ammunition and other war materials from South Vietnam, abolish all U.S. military bases, cancel its "military alliance" with the puppet administration and renounce all policies of intervention and aggression in South Vietnam. The U.S. Administration must stop all acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and completely end all acts of encroachment upon its territory and sovereignty.

2. Pending the realization of peaceful reunification of Vietnam and while Vietnam is temporarily divided into two zones, the military provisions of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Vietnam must be strictly respected: the two zones must refrain from joining any military alliance with foreign countries, allow no foreign military base, troop or military personnel in their respective territory.

3. The internal affairs of South Vietnam must be settled by the South Vietnam people themselves in accordance with the programme of the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation without any foreign intervention.

4. The peaceful reunification of Vietnam must be settled by the people in the two zones without foreign intervention.

Agreements on Vietnam, which the whole world deems it necessary to implement correctly. The U.S. Government must solemnly declare its acceptance of this four-point stand before a political settlement of the Vietnam question can be considered.

Some people abroad are afraid that with the U.S. imperialists' policy of unlimited "escalation" the war in Vietnam may spread in this area and even, become a world war. We must guard against this danger. The best way to prevent such an eventuality is for the Vietnamese people, the American people and the peoples of the world to struggle vigorously against the U.S. imperialists, to defeat their aggressive war in South Vietnam and their "escalation" to North Vietnam, to prepare to foil all their schemes aimed at expanding the war, resolutely to check their adventurist policy, to compel them to respect their international commitments, their undertakings at the 1954 Geneva Conference on Indochina and to compel them to respect the inviolable rights of all countries and all peoples of the world. Only by doing so, can we secure genuine independence and peace and international security, and successfully safeguard the people's revolutionary achievements and the peaceful life of all nations. The struggle against U.S. aggression for national salvation in Vietnam has so far shown that strength does not lie with the U.S. imperialists but with the people, and that it is the people who decide victory and not the U.S. imperialists. Therefore, the people of Vietnam and the world are always confident in their own strength and in their winning position. On the contrary, any compromise with the

U.S. imperialists constitute a very dangerous encouragement to their policy of aggression and war. Such a course of action would precisely lead to the greatest dangers to the peace and security of all countries.

Some people are anxious about the war dragging on in Vietnam which entails heavy sacrifices and losses for the Vietnamese people. These are the heartfelt concern of friends, for which the Vietnamese people are very grateful. But we wish to reaffirm that we will persistently struggle against U.S. aggression for national salvation for ten, twenty years or longer, until complete victory is won. For nothing is more valuable than independence and freedom. Independence or death! That is the spirit of the Proclamation of Independence, the will of our people! Our people will certainly win victory, the U.S. imperialists will certainly be defeated. That is the irreversible trend of our times, the law of development of history. Of course, war entails sacrifices and hardships and countless difficulties, and a persistent and protracted struggle is required. But our people do have the determination and the possibility of overcoming these difficulties, they will grow ever stronger and score ever greater victories as the fight progresses and will win complete victory. If we shrink from the necessary sacrifices and submit to the U.S. imperialists in the face of their aggression, not only countless generations of Vietnamese will have to suffer untold sacrifices and miseries, but the U.S. imperialists will also be encouraged to become still more truculent and reckless, and still more inclined to sow misfortunes on their nations!

Respected President Ho Chi Minh,

Dear comrades and friends,

Dear compatriots,

In celebrating the National Day this year, our entire people are resolved to uphold the traditions of the August Revolution and of the 2nd of September. We are determined to enhance the traditions of solidarity and struggle till final victory, the thorough-going revolutionary spirit, the spirit of self-reliance, of steadfastness and endurance to push forward our revolution from the national-people's democratic revolution to the socialist revolution, and build a new, free and happy life for the people.

In their sacred struggle against U.S. aggression for national salvation, our whole people are fighting with the firm determination to win victory. No matter to what extent the U.S. imperialists may increase their armed forces and expand the war, and no matter how long the struggle may last, the Vietnamese people are determined to fight until complete victory. Celebrating the National Day this year, our people show their resolute will to defeat the U.S. imperialist aggressors, to liberate the South, defend the North, and advance toward the peaceful reunification of the Fatherland, and build a peaceful, united, independent, democratic, strong and prosperous Vietnam, thus contributing to the defence of peace in Indochina, Southeast Asia and the world.

Celebrating the National Day this year, the people of the North are resolved to strengthen socialist North Vietnam in the political, economic,

defence and cultural fields, in order to increase the fighting capabilities and production capacity of the North, constantly to raise the prestige and influence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in the world, and to further the important role of the North in the arduous and certainly victorious struggle of our people against U.S. aggression for national salvation. We are determined to increase the strength of the People's Democratic State, an efficient tool to promote our revolutionary cause.

Celebrating the National Day this year, our people, more than ever before, link their revolutionary struggle with that of the people of the world, and strive to win international sympathy, support and assistance, and at the same time, make their own contribution to the revolutionary cause of peoples of other countries. Wholeheartedly and by all means we strive to unite on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, with the Soviet Union, China and the other fraternal countries of the socialist camp, "the bulwark of world revolution and world peace"; at the same time, we make every effort to unite with the people of Asia, Africa and Latin America, and the working people throughout the world, and together with them struggle for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress.

The August Revolution and the founding of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam ushered in a new era in the life of our people and history of our nation. Twenty years have elapsed since. Twenty years are a short period in the history of a nation. But these are twenty years of valiant struggle and glorious

victories, twenty years of changes and growth of our people, twenty years of advancement of our revolutionary cause. The past twenty years were twenty great years during which our people have been tested and tempered and have acquired the necessary will and strength to accomplish new revolutionary tasks, and win further and glorious victories as have never been known before.

In recalling the arduous and gallant struggle waged by our people during the past twenty years, we are filled with immense pride. We are proud of our Party, the organizer of all victories of our people, and of its clear-sighted line which has been vindicated by the rich and vivid realities of life. We are proud of our people — a heroic people, heroic in fighting and heroic in production work, heroic in the South and heroic in the North, old men and children alike.

Under the victorious banner of the Party, headed by Respected President Ho Chi Minh, let us eagerly march forward!

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